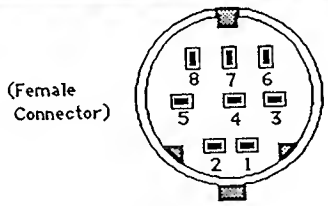
Macintosh Serial Port Pinouts

Disclaimer: Neither the author of VersaTerm-PRO nor its distributors are responsible for any damage due to connecting incompatible equipment or improperly connecting compatible equipment to your Macintosh. Consult your dealer and your Owner's Manual for further details. The information that follows is to be used only as a guide.

The first Macintosh (Mac 512E and earlier) used a DB-9 connector for the serial port connection. The later Macintosh models (Mac Plus, Mac SE and Mac II) all use a smaller, circular mini DIN-8 connector.

Figure X - 1 shows the electrical descriptions of the DIN-8 connector, as viewed from the back of the Macintosh. This pinout applies to both the *Modem* port as well as the *Printer* port.



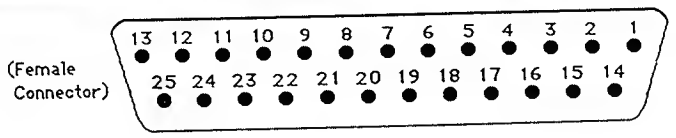
Pin	Name	Description/Notes
1	HSKo	Output Handshake (from Zilog 8530 DTR pin)
2	HSKi/External Clock	Input Handshake (CTS)
3	TxD-	Transmit Data line (use for RS232 transmit data)
4	Ground	
5	RxD-	Receive Data line (use for RS232 receive data)
6	TxD+	Transmit Data line (ignore this line to emulate RS232)
7	Not connected	
8	RxD+	Receive Data line; (ground this line to emulate RS232)

Figure X - 1 Macintosh Serial Port Connector

The act of physically connecting your Macintosh to a modem or mainframe is often one of the most frustrating tasks in using a communications program. Most modem and mainframe serial connections are RS-232 connections using DB-25 connectors.

Let us examine what the physical port of a modem or mainframe looks like and then construct a

cable connecting a Macintosh to that modem or mainframe.



Pin	Name	Description/Notes
1	---	Chassis Ground
2	TXD	Transmit Data - Always Used
3	RXD	Receive Data - Always Used
4	RTS	Request to Send
5	CTS	Clear to Send
6	DSR	Data Set Ready
7	GND	Signal Ground - Always Used
8	DCD	Data Carrier Detect
...		
20	DTR	Data Terminal Ready

Figure X - 2 Modem/Mainframe Serial Port Connector

Figure X - 2 describes the pinout of the standard Modem/Mainframe Connectors (DB-25). Many third-party Macintosh vendors sell cables connecting the Macintosh DIN-8 to the standard DB-25 connection. As of this writing, Apple Computer does **NOT** manufacture such a cable. If your Macintosh dealer supplies you with a cable that has an Apple logo on it, you can be sure that it will not work as a modem cable!

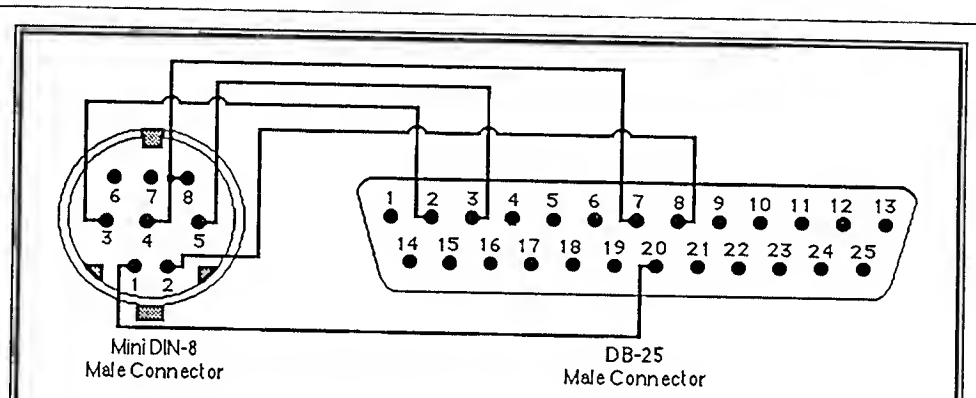


Figure X - 3 Macintosh to Modem/Mainframe Cable

Figure X - 3 describes a diagram of a DIN-8 to DB-25 cable that should properly connect your Macintosh to a Modem or Mainframe. The developer has used such a diagram for years, connected to many different modems and mainframes with no problems.

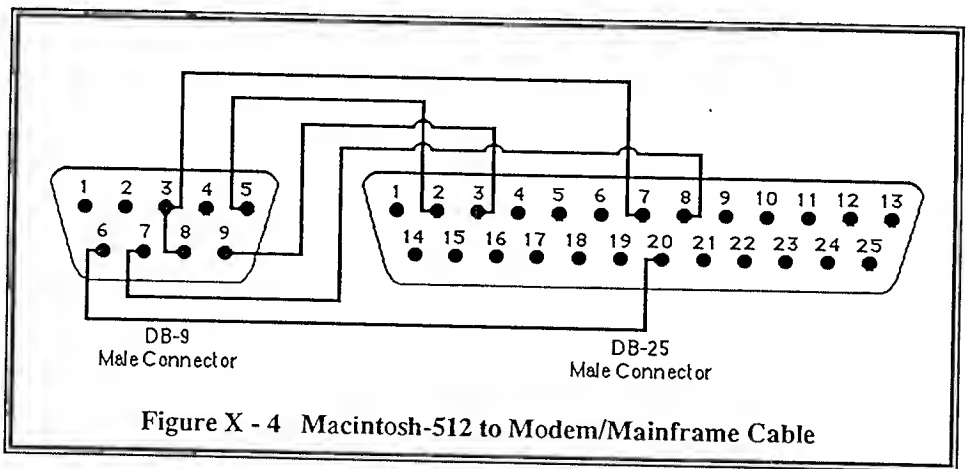


Figure X - 4 Macintosh-512 to Modem/Mainframe Cable

If you have an older Macintosh (Mac 512E or older) your Macintosh has DB-9 connectors as it's physical Modem and Printer serial ports. Figure X - 4 shows a cable diagram that connects the DB-9 connector to a DB-25 connector.